Report

Presented to the Presbytery of Northumberland, by the Committee on Home Missions, Oct. 4th. 1882.

The Committee on Home Missions are happy to report, that the past year has been marked by great progress in the holy and blessed work of Home Missions. Let us glance at a few of the cheering features of the cause, in view of which we should thank God and take courage.

I The Board.

From the report of the Board, presented to the General Assembly in May, we learn that it had in commission during the year 1303 men; which was 83 more laborers than during the year before. These missionaries were laboring in forty States and Territories. They have organized during the year 196 new Sabbath Schools, and 155 new churches; and they have added to their Churches 5.290 members by Letter and 6.195 on

In addition to this, the teachers employed by the Ladies Societies number one hundred, and are doing a noble missionary work in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Idaho, Alaska, Arizona, and Nevada. If we include these, it makes a working force, in the Home Mission field occupied by the Board, of 1.403 Laborers;- all of them devoting their whole time and strength and resources to the glorious work of saving souls and advancing the Redeemer's Kingdom.

The amount of money received into the treasury of the Board from all sources is as follows:

For Home Missions, including balance from last year $ 411.056.35.

This is a gain over the receipts of last year of $ 65.145.28.

Of the entire amount raised, the Ladies contributed 63.686.84.

For Sustentation Department, there has received $ 20.279.26

Adding balance on hand at the beginning of the year, 25.733.50 = 46012.76

This makes the entire resources of the year for both Departments $ 457.069.11

And yet, owing to the increased Expenditures for the very large addition to the number of Laborers in the mission field, the Board closed its year with a debt of $ 15.862.54.

This debt lies entirely on the Home Mission Department, while the Sustentation Department, whose accounts are kept perfectly distinct, has a surplus still on hand of $20.781.59.

II Synod of Harrisburgh.

Within the bounds of the Synod of Harrisburgh, the cause of Home Missions has made cheering progress during the year. The entire sum raised for Home Missions and Sustentation was $11.172.14. This is in advance of the previous year $1.276.72.

Of the whole amount raised,

The Ladies' Societies contributed $2.784.11.

The Sabbath Schools contributed 910.49

Ladies & Sabbath Schools together $3.694.60; which is almost one third of the whole amount raised in the bounds of the Synod. The number of Ladies' Societies contributing has increased from 44 ~~last year to 54~~ this year; and the Sabbath Schools contributing has increased from 30 last year to 36 this year.

III The Presbytery of Northumberland.

The whole amount credited to the Presbytery by the Treasurer of the Board for both Home Missions & Sustentation was $ 2.883.23.

This is a gain over last year of $53,32.

Of the whole amount raised in the bounds of the Presbytery, there was contributed by the Churches ——— $1.792.04.

This is a gain over last year of $548.82.

Contributed by the Ladies Societies ——— $ 36.89.

Gain over last year ——— $405.82.

Contributed by Sabbath Schools ——— ——— ——— 354.30.

This is 88 cents less than last year.

Total as above ——— ——— ——— $2,883,23

The number of Churches contributing was 32.

This is ten churches more than last year.

The largest contributions were made by the following churches:-

Williamsport 2d. $ 365.85; Warrior Run $308.85;

Mahoning $ 285.30; Grove $250; Lewisburgh $ 223;

~~Williamsport~~ 1st $205.54; Great Island $190.

The number of non-contributing churches was 10: viz

Beech Creek, Berwick, Elysburgh, Emporium, Holland Run,

Linden, Mc Ewinsville, Montgomery, Northumberland,

and Ravens Creek.

The number of Ladies Societies contributing is nine; which is one more than last year. We are sorry to miss the gift of the Moorsburgh Ladies Society this year. This Society was one of the earliest organizations of ladies in the Presbytery, and deserves great credit for its fidelity hitherto. We hope to hear a good account of it next year. Two new organizations of Ladies have reported this year; viz- Grove & Chillisquaque.

The ladies of Great Island & Grove gave each $150 =	$300
The ladies of Mahoning Society gave	131.01
The ladies of Williamsport 2d gave	68.06
The ladies of Bald Eagle & Nittany, Bloomsburgh, and Williamsport 1st gave each over $60 =	184.07
The Ladies Society of Lycoming Contributed	50.00
The Ladies Society of Chillisquaque Contributed	3.75
Which ~~the amount~~ by the Ladies as above	$736.89

The number of Sabbath Schools contributing this year is eight; which is one less than last year. The schools which have contributed most are Williamsport 2d $115.61; and Lewisburgh $112.50.

During the year the Committee, under the direction of Presbytery, have recommended to the Board the following Churches for aid in the support of their respective Pastors: viz- Centralia Church for $ 100; commission to date from Nov. 1st 1881. Pennsdale Church for $ 100; commission to date from Ap. 1st 1882. Lycoming Church for $ 100; commission to date from April 1st 1882. Shiloh Church to Sustentation Department for $150;— granted $ 100;— commission to date from May 12th 1882. The Committee have received from the Board a card stating that the Church of Emporium had been granted $200. The application for this was not made through your Committee, or upon its recommendation; and therefore does not fall properly within our report. But adding this grant, the whole amount which the Churches within the bounds of the ~~Presbytery~~ are receiving this year is $ 600. Deducting this from the amount given to the Board by Presbytery, there remains $ 2,283.23, to be used in the general Home Missionary work outside of our own territorial limits.

We congratulate Presbytery upon the cheering indications of an increasing appreciation of the work of Home Mission in our Churches, and of the growing spirit of Christian benevolence among our ladies and among the Children of our Sabbath Schools. And yet your Committee cannot help expressing their great disappointment to find that the Ladies Societies contributing have only increased by one since our last annual report,- that while the ladies of Nine Churches have done a noble work in raising this year $ 736.89,- thus showing what the ladies of all our Churches could accomplish, if they unitedly and heartily engaged in this work: yet that the ladies of 39 of our churches turned a deaf ear to all appeals, coming down to them from the Woman's Executive Committee of Home Mission, the Board, ~~the Presbytery~~, the Synod, and the General Assembly itself, and in tones of deepest earnestness calling upon them and entreating them, to lend their efficient aid to save our beloved land and the millions of perishing souls that God in his providence is sending to our shores.

"Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the Streets of Ashkelon; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph;"- that the ladies of only nine churches in this Presbytery of Northumberland have shown any interest in this most holy work of Christian benevolence and patriotism; while the ladies of 39 churches have treated the calls for their help in this work as the whistlings of the idle wind, and have done nothing whatever for the cause of Home Missions in the way of organized effort.

Not less disappointed are we to find that, instead of an increase in the number of Sabbath Schools contributing to Home Missions as we had fondly hoped, there were only eight Schools that did any thing for the cause,- one less than last year; leaving probably not less than forty Schools ~~that have~~ contributed nothing. Surely the children and youth of our Sabbath Schools, above all other classes, have the deepest interests at stake in the salvation of this glorious land; in deciding what is to be the future character of the masses among whom they are to live,

and by whom they are to be governed and con=
trolled when the present adult generation has passed away. On this matter
they ought to be carefully taught; and they should be im=
pressed with the duty of doing what they can even now
to preserve our free institutions from destruction, and to
bring the minds and hearts of the teeming millions, that
are flowing yearly into our new States and Territories,
under the elevating and saving power of the gospel.

May we not appeal to the pastors and Sessions,
to urge the organization of Ladies Societies for Home
Missions in all their congregations; and also to see
that their Sabbath Schools are instructed in re=
gard to giving for this great and patriotic and
Heaven-blessed cause? Shall we not all do what
in us lies to increase the funds of the Board this
year to "half a million dollars"- the sum which the
deliberate judgment of the General Assembly declares
to be "absolutely needed" to the successful prosecution
of their work?

Had the Assembly called for one million of dollars and a three fold increase of missionary laborers, it would not have been more than the exigencies of our country require.

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to the harvest!" This is the language of the first Home Missionary, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we glory as the great originator of Home Missions; & who has laid on his disciples the work of preaching the gospel first of all in the home field. His words should come with solemn weight to us to day, as we contemplate the whightening fields of this vast land so rapidly filling up with untold multitudes, who have cast in their destiny with us, and come among us to share our rights and privileges. These millions, ~~gathering~~ in from so many lands, must have the gospel preached to them or perish. They must have the pure gospel of Christ furnished to them, to deliver them from the bondage of sin and Satan, and to bring them into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

They must have the Church, & the open Bible, & the Prayer Meeting, & the Sabbath School, & Christian influence & example, & Prohibition, to elevate and purify them, and fit them to become good and useful citizens. As they come in increasing numbers from year to year, they must be thoroughly enlightened and evangelised; or this nation, with all its wealth of free institutions, and religious privileges, and free Schools and Colleges, and energy and Enterprise, must pass away; and its brightening glories and hopes must be numbered with the things that were.

We do not mean that this land, even if left unevangelized, will become an uninhabited wilderness & be blotted out from the map of the world like the empires of Assyria & Babylon of old; or even that it will cease to make advance in population & resources, in rail roads & Manufactures & wealth & Commerce. In things like these we may continue to flourish & grow; —— "but we shall perish as a free republic; perish as a church; perish as a great political and moral light held up to the view of the ..

Kindreds of the earth."

In view then of the command of our Master,— in view of our responsibilities as American citizens,— in view of the interests of coming generations,— in view of the souls that must perish unless the gospel is preached to them;- let us all awake, and employ all the means and resources that God has placed in our power, to promote to the utmost the holy work of Home Missions in our beloved land.

Respectfully submitted

W. Sterling, Chairman

of Comtee on Home Missions

Report of
Committee on Home Missions
in Northumberland Presby

1882